



Minister Hooyboer-Winklaar and the SKOA COME TO AN AGREEMENT on the school fee raise

AFTER much negotiation between the Minister of Education and the Foundation for Catholic Education Aruba (SKOA), today the parties announce that they have come to an agreement regarding the school fee raise. The raise will be lower than the original fee announced by the SKOA earlier this year, and they intend to keep this new fee as is for the next two school years, the Ministry of Education informed.

The new fee, to which both parties have

agreed, has been set at Afl 175 for the school year 2015-2016, instead of the original Afl 250. The parties say the SKOA will try to maintain this same fee for the 2016-2017 school year as well. Having reached this agreement, the Minister of Education has also decided to drop the court case against the SKOA.

In the meanwhile, the SKOA will continue to analyze their operational costs closely, both costs related to infrastructure of the schools, as well as personnel costs.

In November of last year, the SKOA made the announcement that they would be raising the school fee for children attending one of their schools. This was the first time in 14 years that the foundation, that manages the most schools on the island, raised the fees, saying they were no longer able to continue operations without an adaptation to the fees.

The Minister of Education and the SKOA differed on the amount the SKOA had stipulated. Now after they reopened negotiations, the parties

finally agree on the school fee amount. In the cases of families who have difficulty paying the new fee, the SKOA will handle these cases as needed on an individual basis, as they have been doing for various years. This week parents will be receiving letters informing them of this most recent adjustment to the school fees.

Both parties report being satisfied to have been able to come to terms in the current situation, and will now be able to continue working together on improving education on Aruba.

Police and DTP unite to

CONTROL autobuses



OUT of 39 autobuses that were controlled in a joint action between the Police Corp (KPA) and the Department of Public Transportation (DTP) on Monday, seven did not have the required documentation, and were towed as a result. Police also wrote out 12 reports for various offenses committed by several of the autobus drivers, said Chief Constable Robert Vos.

The action took place from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m., where Police from Oranjestad checked if the autobus drivers had their inspection card, proof of insurance, proof of tax payment (plate numbers), valid driver's license, and operating license in order. Several drivers were found driving without their operating license, as well as other paperwork that was not up to date.

Chief Constable Vos, who headed the control, said the action had a "positive result". The Police made use of the opportunity to remind the autobus drivers of their responsibility for the safety of their clients, as well as their obligation to have all their paperwork in order.

Police also stressed on the importance of the vehicles being in good condition, including carrying a spare tire, and that drivers had to be properly dressed, since they are providing a service to the community, and a proper dress is part of this service.

Acting Team Manager for the DTP Valerie Figaroa, who also participated in the action, said it had been very fruitful. The attention was placed on safety on the road, and the DTP will be following up after the action to ensure that all drivers have updated paperwork, and that their vehicles are safe.

Johnny Henriquez of the KPA said the Police was there to back up the DTP, who controlled the necessary permits, while to Police checked on the other required documentation. The client who gets onto an autobus must have the confidence that everything is in order, but the Police and DTP were surprised to find some autobuses on the street that did not even have valid insurance, which is regrettable, Henriquez said.

Some drivers, Henriquez added, were not happy with the controls, but now must set things "straight" and the drivers must carry their responsibility.

The Police Corp was also prepared for the presence of school children in the autobuses during the controls, and made sure all children were taken directly to their school and were did not get into trouble.

This is the first of more actions that are on the way, in which the Police will control public transport, including taxis and fleet vehicles.





The Police Corp appoints 24 NEW Chief Constables

"A decree is more than a promotion, it is an incentive to overcome and protect"

that will continue to push you in the right direction," the High Commissioner said.

High Commissioner Richardson also shared other words of support, encouragement, and determination, along with his

best wishes for the Officers to continue forward in their careers in the Police Corp.

For the rank of Chief Constable 1, Officer Lloyd Wever received his Governmental decree. For the Brigadier rank, the class of 2009 received their promotion. These were Officers Jim Geerman, Remyart Giel, Franklin Fernandes Pedra, Indira Jansen, Charlene Tromp, Jessica Teixeira, Marcelino Kock, Tino Ruiz, Sandrick Albus, Carlos Kock, Jonathan Ras,

Alicia Oduber and Raymond Rasmijn. From the class of 2010, the Officers who received the Brigadier rank were Ahira Ignacia, Olando Nicastia, Rene Nicholson, Dayton Phillip, Nixel Scholten, Jarisson Koolman, Richinel Maduro, Alexander Richardson, Jeneida Whitfield and Daily Renfrum.

Officers who received their decree for the rank of Policemen from class 2013 were Chenry Abdul, Alvin Bayubay, Michel Bislip, Derek de Castro, Darwin Escobar Romero, Michael Geerman, Chantee Halley, Nicole Illidge, Eron Jacobs, Lyndrick Kelly, Litmar Lacle, Marshall Ras, Leroy Stuart, Rashella Thiel, Simon Van Eenennaam, Alexander Wernet, Waldrick Willems, and Gregory Wouters.

High Commissioner Richardson also submitted promotions for Chief Constable to a rather large group that has been active in the Police Corp for a while. "Out of 64 Officers who are receiving their promotion today, 24 belong to the group of Chief Constables. And even though our Corp is young, we depend on you to guide the younger

ones to be upright, to keep the sense of belonging to a community that needs them, and to always continue doing their utmost to keep Aruba a safe place for one and all."

The Officers who now carry the title of Chief Constable are Hanskoemar Mohan, Rudy G.L. Jansen, Esteban A. Kelly, Ryan F. Anthony, Jair M. Oduber, RYANNE R.D. Kock, Eduardo R. Bremo, Rivelino B. Sabajo, San Antonio St. Jacoba, Deonisio R. Henriquez, Mike A. Goeloe, Johnny M. Erasmus, Edison R. Correa, Juan D. Bislip, Jelitza G. Croes, Dinaira R. Boekhouth-Dijkhoff, Elias E.D. Halabi, Alix Geerman, Marcelino A.G. Ras, Angelo G. Anthony, Robert M. Vos, Elisa M. Van Loon, Michael R. Croes, Giovanni C. Heyliger, Jason S.W. Ridderstaat, Norberto Tromp, Bidjakoemar Mohan, Jonathan P. Orman, Joaquin A.M. Pieters, Josephus A. H. Reurters, Rolando G.E. Maduro, Robert J.B. Kock, Alvin G. Lacle, Marlon I. Pieters, Julaika D. Rosel, Eric A. Nicolaas, Joshua A. Campbell, Jeanette M. Maduro, Jane L. Werleman, Edgar F.A. Maduro, Ewald J.A. Lacle, and Omar G.R. Werleman.

RECENTLY a special celebration took place at the Center for Justice in Macuarima, where Police High Commissioner Adolfo 'Dolfi' Richardson submitted the decree for the promotion of Officers that are changing ranks.

"I am happy to see members of the family present, because the family is the anchor in our lives and is what we fall back on after a long and hard day at work. Do not forget that it is the love for your families that will be the strength

First certificates based on preferential treatment have already been granted

for the Economic zone in San Nicolas



DURING the budget meetings in Parliament, Minister of Economic Affairs, Communication, Energy, and the Environment Mike de Meza elaborated on the incentivized zone in San Nicolas that is being established to help facilitate diversification of the Aruban economy.

"We have already taken the first steps towards modernizing our free zone, as well as finalizing the legislative process of the so-called preferential policy that will make the Economic zone in San Nicolas possible," De Meza said in Parliament last week.

In 2013 the Minister announced the preferential fiscal policy as part of facilitating the diversification of the economy, making it possible for Aruba to position itself as a hub in the region, the Ministry said in a statement.

In Parliament the Minister informed the Members that the Department of Legislation and Legal Affairs were in the final phases of the law initiative, including all the presented adjustments on the existing laws and policies through the preferential policy.

"In this way we are making the San Nicolas area more beneficial for investors and for new economic activity. Because the Economic Zone of San Nicolas consists of various fiscal aspects, colleague Minister of Finance Angel Bermudez is giving his input on this."

De Meza explained how the Government worked on three zones as fiscal instruments to help diversify the economic activities. "In the first place, the free zone. In the second place, the Economic Zone in San Nicolas, and lastly we will be establishing a Green Zone, which will be a zone destined for sustainable activities, situated in the area west of the Dr. Eduard Cheung Center for Innovation," the Minister said.

The first certificates to companies that have applied to each of these zones have already been granted. "Aruba becomes more attractive for investors who want to make investments on Aruba and utilize these zones. The positive results of these three new fiscal incentives have already become visible," Minister De Meza said in Parliament.

The Royal Bank launches

RBC Blue Water Project™ 2015



EVERY year the Royal Bank (RBC) celebrates Blue Water Day in June as part of its multi-annual commitment to conserving clean water in the world. RBC does this through awareness programs and projects related to water and various other topics that have to do with the care of the environment.

Pierre Rafini, Market Head Business Banking for the Dutch Caribbean & Suriname and Country Manager said: "We want to live this commitment in communities around the world and also with our staff, who each year roll up their sleeves to participate in community activities related to topics of bringing awareness and care of the environment. To celebrate Blue Water Day with our community and to create a lasting impression in the minds of our people, this year we are organizing a painting competition to incite more awareness, showing the importance of water and capturing the beauty of water in a painting."

Therefore RBC is inviting everyone who likes to paint, both professionals and amateurs to participate in this competition. Let water stimulate your creativity and inspire you to paint the most beautiful painting for this competition, the Beauty of our Water, organizers said.

The Beauty of Our Water

To participate, turn in your painting until June 4 at RBC's Sasaki Branch, along with your name, age, contact information, and a brief explanation on your painting. Demonstrate how beautiful and important clean WATER is to you, for the chance to win Afl 1000.

There will be three age categories in the competition: 7 to 12 year-olds, 13-18 year-olds, and 18 and up. RBC will select a winner from each category, who will each receive Afl 1000 cash prize.

The painting must be related to water, and the size must be 56 cm x 40 cm.

For additional information on the competition, please visit www.rbc.com/bluewater/caribbean.



Minister Paul Croes congratulates

Red Cross Aruba with their building expansion

LAST week Red Cross Aruba had two celebrations in one, the International Day of Red Cross Volunteers on May 8, and the placing of the first stone in the expansion of their warehouse.

During the celebrations, the Red Cross took time to appreciate their volunteers who are always ready to lend a helping hand, and take their job seriously.

The Red Cross Aruba has 140 volunteers total, and will also be celebrating 60 years of existence on the island in 2017.

The Red Cross will be introducing several new programs to Aruba that will benefit the community, which will all be presented by their volunteers. One such program will be a course for people detained at the KIA prison facility which will help them be better prepared for life outside of prison once they leave, and also to help each other while in the institution, and to help others once they are out.

Minister of Social Affairs Paul Croes also attended the event, congratulating all of the volunteers for their dedication, and especially the youth volunteers. "We feel very happy that we have positive young people that make a difference in our community. Continue with this important work you are executing. We are very proud of each one of you," Minister Croes said.

After the Minister, together with Prime Minister Mike Eman, placed the first stone of the building expansion, all the attendees toasted the Red Cross Aruba volunteers.



According to Minister Angel Bermudez

More than 200 public servants to be sworn in this month



LAST week 42 professionals working in various Government departments, such as the Department of Human Resources (DRH), the Reporting Center for Unusual Transactions (MOT), and the Department of Central Accounting (CAD) were officially sworn in as public servants in the presence of Minister of Finance Angel Bermudez and the directors of the respective departments. During the past couple of years, the Minister said, this process of

officially swearing in professionals as Government employees has had significant delays. So the Minister wanted to place an emphasis on this process, which is important for Government employees.

"The swearing in that you will maintain a high level of integrity while in the service of the Government should actually take place when you enter into service, but for several bureaucratic

reasons this process was severely delayed here in Aruba," Bermudez said. "I am happy, however, that we have started with his first group so that this procedure can be completed, and in the coming weeks we can continue with the other groups from the other departments."

At the same time both Minister Bermudez as well as DRH Director Omayra Lares hope they will be able to

finalize the swearing in of another 200 employees in the Ministry of Finance and Governmental Organization that still need to take place.

Minister Bermudez wishes all the public servants of DRH, MOT, and CAD that were sworn in last week all manner of success in their function and that they will continue to execute their jobs with sound judgment, integrity, and a professional conscience.

Gasoline prices GO UP ↑

STARTING today, May 13, 2015, prices for the sale of petroleum products will go up. This is valid for gasoline, diesel and kerosene, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Communication, Energy and the Environment informs.

The retail sales price will change as follows: Gasoline unleaded-premium: 189,4 cent per liter (an increase of 8,5 cent); Diesel LS: 153,1 cent per liter (an increase of 2,7 cent) and Kerosene: 140,1 cent per liter (an increase of 3,3 cent). The above mentioned prices include BBO/BAZV.

ALL female crew on InselAir flight



SUNDAY, May 10, 2015 a unique event took place in the history of InselAir and Curacao aviation in general. For the first time an all female crew team (pilot, co-pilot & cabin attendant) was scheduled to operate flights from Curacao to Aruba and Bonaire. In the picture: Captain Rolanda van Eikema-Hommes, First Officer Carol-Rose Palm and Cabin Attendant Annaly Hernandez.



USFOL Volunteers Continue Their Support of SEDA

ON May 7, 2015, five volunteers from the U.S. Forward Operating Location (USFOL) partnered with six volunteers and staff from Fundashon Sentro di Dama (SEDA). SEDA is a non-profit organization focused on supporting women, children and teens in crisis as well as a variety of outreach projects.

The USFOL team devoted three hours applying a new coat of paint to the exterior/interior of the community center. The USFOL staff continues to be involved with the local community to express their long-standing appreciation for the hospitality they have received from the citizens of Curacao.

Write Your Own Life's Story

New class given by the National Library

THE National Library Aruba (BNA) is starting a short course for the 60-plus crowd called Write Your Own Life's Story. The class will start on Wednesday, June 3, and will meet for four Wednesdays at the Library from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Participants will get the opportunity to write their life's story in their own way with the guidance of a professional coach. The language of instruction will be Dutch. Through different ideas, topics, and points of

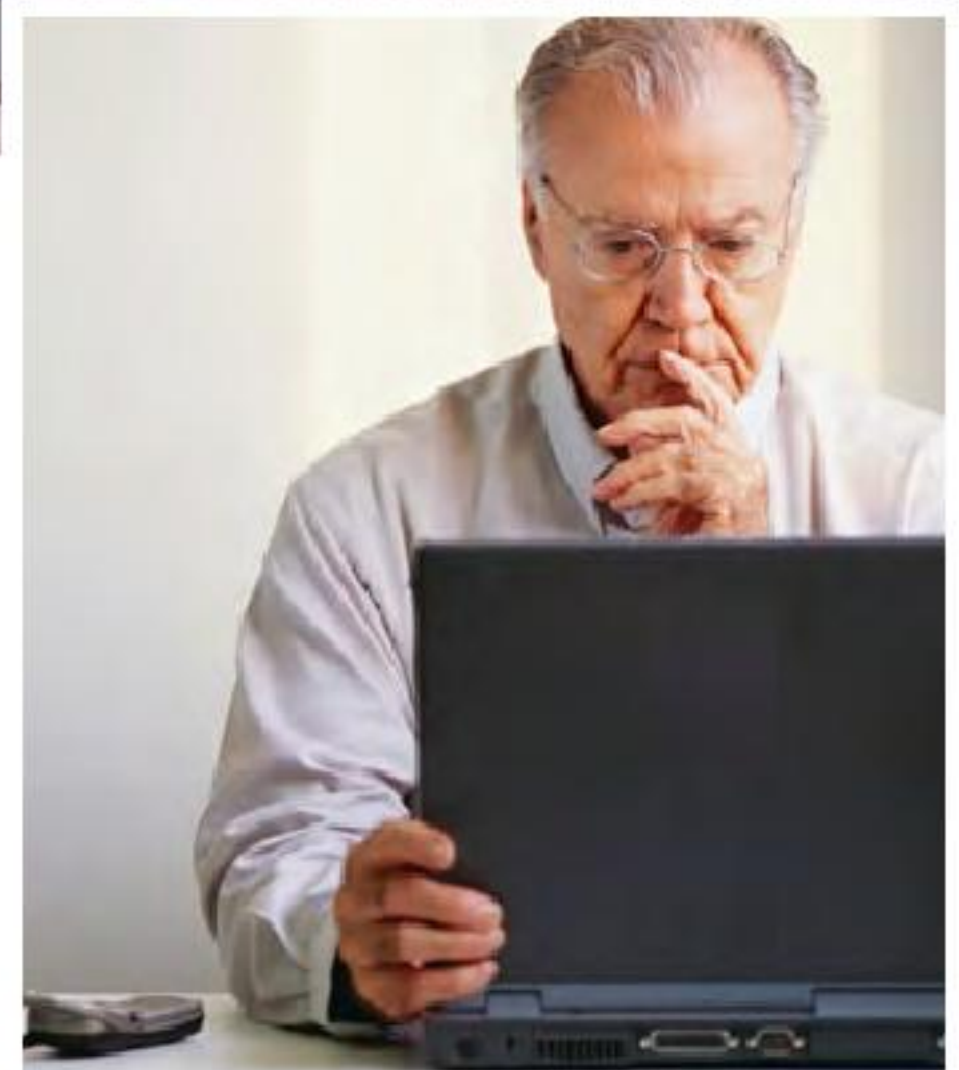
view, the participants will complete several assignments to practice their skills. There are many ways to start writing and start the creative process. It is possible to write stories in many ways, such as in a chronological order, or based on topics, such as places where someone has lived, experiences that have made an impact, schools that were visited, and life choices. Participants can also inspire each other, and interchange ideas on how to complete the

story. There will also be the opportunity to read fragments to each other, and to ask questions.

Participation costs Afl 110 per person and registration can be done via e-mail at info@bibliotecanacionalaw.

Don't be satisfied with stories, how things have gone with others.

Unfold your own myth.
- Rumi, from The Essential Rumi



Joel Kuiperi places FIFTH

at the Pan American Youth
Weightlifting Championship



AT the beginning of the month, the Pan American Youth Weightlifting Championship took place in Cartagena, Colombia. Athlete Joel Kuiperi from Aruba, together with his coach Adolfo Gallego traveled to participate in this competition, in which Kuiperi was able to place in fifth place.

Kuiperi competed in the 105 kg category, together with six other competitors. In his snatch lift, Kuiperi was able to lift 117 kg, and in clean & jerk, Kuiperi lifted 145 kg, for a total of 262 kg. This placed Kuiperi in fifth place in the competition.

With his lifts, Kuiperi was also able to break two Aruban youth records, in the snatch category with 2 kg, and in the total, with 2 kg.

Kuiperi is a young athlete, who has been practicing the sport for only one year and a half. Therefore, the Aruban weightlifting community expects to see much more from this young man.

The winners in the Pan American Championships were Johan Rodriguez from Colombia who snatched the Gold Medal with a total lift of 315 kg. The Silver Medal went to Miguel Rodriguez from Mexico who lifted a total of 297 kg, and the Bronze Medal went to Sergio Cantos from Ecuador who lifted 285 kg total.

The trophies went to Colombia in first place with 221 points total, Mexico in second place with 182 points total, and Ecuador in third place with 177 points total.

Aruba Amateur Weightlifting Association (AAWA) is "super proud" of Joel Kuiperi and his trainer Adolfo Gallego Salas for their excellent performance at this event. The AAWA also thanks Sport Subsidie Commissie and Lotto pa Deporte who helped make the trip possible.



Cleanup Continues After Deadly Van Tornado



CLEANUP continues in an East Texas town after a tornado left a former Garland police officer and his wife dead, several critically hurt and dozens of buildings damaged, including schools.

Van Zandt County emergency management coordinator Chuck Allen confirmed that retired Garland police Lt. David Tapley and his wife, Brenda, were killed Sunday night when the tornado — with winds as fast as 140 mph — hit Van, a town of 2,600 located 70 miles southeast of Dallas. Tapley spent 28 years with the Garland Police Department before retiring in 2006.

Officials said nine people remained hospitalized Tuesday in Tyler, with four in critical condition and five in good condition.

The tornado leveled or damaged more than 120 homes in the town, leaving many with nowhere to turn.

The Van Independent School District canceled classes again Tuesday and there is no word yet when they will reopen. School was called off Monday as emergency personnel surveyed the damage.

Gov. Greg Abbott issued a disaster declaration for Van Zandt County, plus for Bosque, Clay, Denton, Eastland, Gaines and Montague (counties following storms. That clears the way for more government help.

American Red Cross officials said they expect to help about 30 people with food and water, insurance and even beds.

Area police said they set up barricades throughout the town to prevent looting.

Source: nbcdfw

North Korean leader ordered aunt to be poisoned, defector says



SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (CNN) - Mr. Park shifts uncomfortably in his seat. As one of the most senior North Korean officials to ever defect, he was preparing to tell the ugly truth about the regime he served faithfully for decades.

This is not his real name; he wants his identity hidden for fear of retribution against friends and family still in Pyongyang. It's not surprising when you hear what he has to say.

His first allegation is shocking. He claims North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered his own aunt, a blood relative, to be poisoned.

"On May 5th or 6th of last year," says Park. "Kim Jong Un ordered his aunt, Kim Kyong Hui, to be killed. Only his bodyguard unit, Unit 974, knew this -- now senior officials also know she was poisoned." Park says Kim Jong Un wanted to silence his aunt,

who complained angrily for months after her husband and presumed No. 2 in the country, Jang Song Thaek, was killed in December 2013.

WHERE IS KIM KYONG HUI?

The fate of Kim Kyong Hui has been the subject of intense speculation since she disappeared from public view in September 2013, a few months before her husband's death.

Various reports have suggested that she had a fatal stroke, heart attack, committed suicide or was in a vegetative state after undergoing surgery for a brain tumor. In February, it emerged in parliament that the South Korean intelligence agency believed she was still alive.

HIGH-LEVEL PURGES?

South Korea's national intelligence service has also claimed that, since coming to power, Kim has executed his enemies, killing at least 15 senior officials so far this year.

CNN put the allegation to a high-ranking member of North Korea's inner circle during a rare visit to Pyongyang last week.

"Malicious slander!" replied Park Yong Chol, the deputy director of the DPRK Institute for Research into National Reunification.

"Especially because they tried to link the alleged statement to the august name of our Supreme Leader Marshall Kim Jong Un," he added.

But he did not deny that executions take place here of those who try to overthrow the government or subvert the system. "It is very normal for any country to go after hostile elements and punish them and execute them."

WHO WAS JANG?

Jang and his wife had been tasked with guiding the young leader through his early years of power after the death of former leader, Kim Jong Il. But Park says the leader and his uncle did not see eye to eye on money.

"After a year and a half, Kim Jong Un wanted to build the Masikryong Ski Resort and Munsu Water Park, basing it on his experience in Switzerland. Jang Song Thaek initially agreed ... but suggested building the economy first. That is where the friction began."

According to Park, Jang was arrested, tried and executed in less than a week. "Jang was not executed publicly but in an underground secret room. Nobody said they witnessed the execution of Jang," says Park. But he claims up to 30 of his and his wife's aides were killed far more publicly, some by firing squad, not using an ordinary gun, but four-barrel machine guns.

Kim Jong Un publicly called his uncle "scum," claiming he had been working against the government and trying to topple the regime. Park says he worked closely with Jang Song Taek and these accusations were simply not true.

Much of what Park tells us cannot be independently confirmed, North Korea is one of the most closed and repressive countries on earth.

Park paints Kim Jong Un as a brutal dictator whose actions have shocked those in and outside North Korea. An elite accustomed to purges and executions has been shaken by Kim Jong Un's willingness to kill even family members if they dare to disagree.

In Nepal, after new earthquake

PEOPLE SEEK OPEN SPACES TO AVOID FALLING DEBRIS

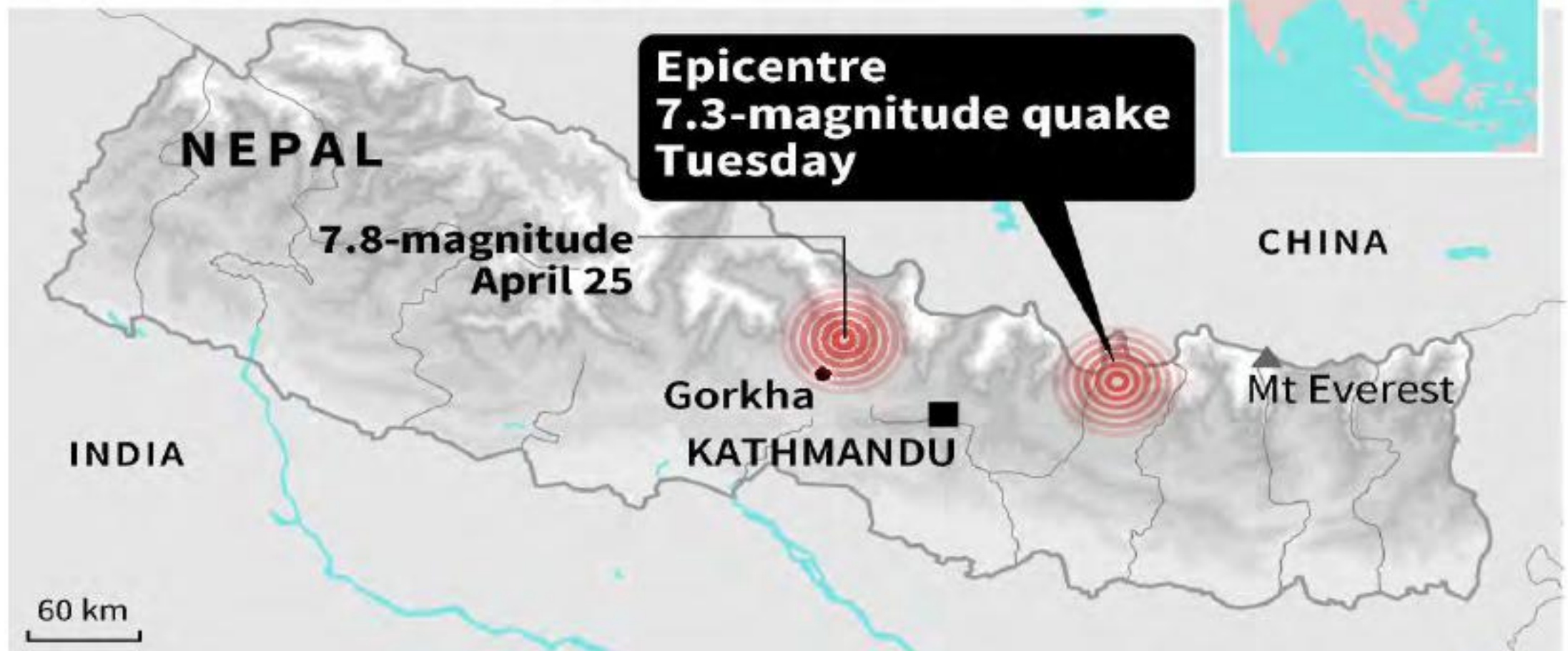
On Tuesday, the ground shook. Again.

But it soon became clear that this was no mere aftershock, scary though those have been.

This was another major earthquake, the kind where you run for your life, where you seek any open area so nothing falls on your head and you don't get trapped under the rubble.

It was then, near the epicenter of Tuesday's quake, that the world's most dangerous airport became a place of safe haven.

Nepal new quake



Source: USGS

AFP





IN SEARCH OF ANY OPEN AREA

People in Lukla -- a town that serves as a gateway to the Everest region and that was near the epicenter of Tuesday's quake -- rushed to the airport.

Most of Lukla's buildings are perched on hilly grounds.

The airport is said to be highly dangerous because its runway is short, and it's surrounded by mountains. But on Tuesday, Chungba Sherpa was glad to be there.

"People are here because there is open space," he said by telephone. "They are very scared."

Not for the first time. On April 25 -- just two weeks and three days ago -- Nepal was devastated by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake. More than 8,000 people were killed and nearly 18,000 were injured.

NO MERE AFTERSHOCK

A frightening series of aftershocks has kept residents of Nepal on edge. But none had nearly the power of Tuesday's magnitude-7.3 quake, which was centered near Mount Everest.

It was felt with force 52 miles (83 kilometers) to the east, in the country's capital, Kathmandu, which suffered so much in the April earthquake.

Mingma Sherpa was in his car with two friends in Thamel, Kathmandu's congested tourist district, when the earth began to tremble.

In his rear-view mirror he saw people running in panic. It was then that he knew it was another earthquake.

He was in a hotel parking lot, surrounded by tall buildings. The ground shook for 30 seconds.

He ordered his friends out of the car, and they ran for their lives, joining the crowd, desperately seeking an open space in a part of Kathmandu where there are few.

Eventually, when everything stopped, he was able to make it back home.

FLOWER POTS TUMBLING, STAIRS SHAKING, PEOPLE FLEEING

Anup Kaphle, the digital foreign editor for the Washington Post, was in the Shangri La hotel in Kathmandu when the quake hit. He saw flower pots tumbling. The stairs were shaking.

He waited a minute and then ran out.

The streets were in chaos, clogged with traffic. People were staying outside.

But, in his area, Kaphle did not see any fresh buildings down.

"I DON'T THINK ANYONE WILL BE SLEEPING INDOORS"

Orla Fagan, a spokeswoman for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, was on the second floor of a building in Kathmandu when the shaking began. An earthquake alarm filled the air -- high-pitched, indicating the quake was intense.

Eight people tried to shelter under a door frame, she said.

"It was very, very scary," she said. "The quake was so powerful you couldn't move if you wanted to."

People were out on the streets, Fagan said by telephone, too frightened to go inside.

And the fear, now reinforced by a second major earthquake, seemed likely to persist.

"I don't think anyone will be sleeping indoors tonight," she said.

Source: CNN

US Marine Helicopter Missing in Nepal Earthquake Aid Mission

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. military helicopter carrying six Marines and two Nepalese Army soldiers went missing during a mission in Nepal delivering aid to earthquake victims, U.S. defense officials said Tuesday, but so far there have been no indications that the aircraft crashed.

U.S. Army Col. Steve Warren said an Indian helicopter in the air nearby at the time heard radio chatter about a possible fuel problem. He said the Huey had dropped off supplies in one location and was en route to a second site when contact was lost. He said officials are hopeful that the aircraft is simply missing because there has been no smoke or other signs of a crash.

Navy Capt. Chris Sims says the Huey was conducting disaster relief operations near Charikot, Nepal, on Tuesday, around 9 a.m. EDT.

Warren said other U.S. aircraft had searched the area, but because it's now dark members of the Nepalese military are conducting the search on foot. He said they are moving toward the second aid location to see if the helicopter landed near there.

The aircraft is part of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469.

The incident is under investigation.



A UH-1Y Huey takes off carrying supplies from the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal, May 7, 2015. Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 Hueys have been assisting the Nepalese government to transport food, water, and shelter supplies to the Nepalese people in the rural areas of Nepal.

MANDALINE HATCH/U.S. MARINE CORPS

Source: Stripes.com

Singapore Convicts Teenager of Obscenity and Insulting Religious Feelings



HONG KONG — A teenager who posted a video criticizing Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of modern Singapore, was convicted on charges of obscenity and insulting religious feelings by a court in the city-state on Tuesday.

Prosecutors had asked the court to sentence Amos Yee, 16, to probation and counseling rather than prison time or a fine. A June 2 hearing has been scheduled for the announcement of his sentence. His arrest this spring, at a time when many Singaporeans were mourning the March 23 death of Mr. Lee, brought a renewed focus on Singapore's reputation for tight limits on expression.

Officials there have pursued legal cases against critics and foreign news media outlets including The International Herald Tribune, now the International New York Times.

Mr. Yee had posted a short video on YouTube titled "Lee Kuan Yew Is Finally Dead!" in which he questioned the late leader's legacy. He said Mr. Lee and Jesus were "both power hungry and malicious" and criticized their followers, comments that formed the basis of the charge that he had violated a Singapore law against acting with "deliberate intention of wounding the religious or racial feelings."

The teenager also posted an image on his blog depicting Mr. Lee engaged in a sex act with Margaret Thatcher, the former prime minister of Britain, which led to the obscenity charge.

"His actions show him to be a misguided young man who sought to gain attention for himself by deliberately posting obscene material to shock and deliberately posting material he admits he knew would cause ill will among Christians," a deputy public prosecutor, Hay Hung Chun, told the court on Tuesday.

"His actions are far from being 'noble' or imbued with good intentions," Mr. Hay said.

Prosecutors told the court a fine or prison time would be inappropriate given Mr. Yee's age. "What he urgently needs is counseling and appropriate probation," Mr. Hay said.

Mr. Yee faces a prison term of up to three years on the charge of wounding religious feelings, and up to three months in prison on the obscenity charge. Shortly after his arrest, the teenager was released on bail posted by a supporter, and then returned to custody in Changi Prison after he refused to comply with bail requirements that he not continue posting online.

On Tuesday, Singapore's prosecutors asked for an easing of the bail terms so he would not continue to be held. Mr. Yee was released Tuesday evening on the equivalent of \$7,500 bail, which was posted by his father, according to his lawyer.

Alfred Dodwell, a lawyer for Mr. Yee, said the teenage blogger was raised as a Catholic but embraced atheism. Mr. Yee viewed the bail requirements as a gag order and the charges against him as an attack on free speech, his lawyer said. "He feels very strongly about his message," Mr. Dodwell said in a telephone interview after a two-day trial last week. "Perhaps the timing and tone and tenor were wrong, but my point was that while all this may feel reprehensible and naughty, has a crime been committed? As a lawyer my message was that it was wrongly timed, but there is no crime." Mr. Yee was considering whether to appeal, Mr. Dodwell said.

The case against Mr. Yee set off criticism over the city-state's handling of critical speech.

"Criminalizing free expression by anyone who dares mock the powers that be is a tried and true practice of the Singapore government, and Amos Yee is the latest victim," said Phil Robertson, the Bangkok-based deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Asia division.

Another speech case in Singapore has also attracted attention. Ai Takagi, a 22-year-old Australian woman, and Yang Kaiheng, a 26-year-old Singaporean man, were charged with sedition in April over a series of blog posts on their website The Real Singapore, which is now defunct, that criticized foreign workers in the city-state. The pair are accused of promoting "feelings of ill will and hostility between different races or classes of the population of Singapore."

Foreigners make up about one-third of Singapore's work force, and their growing numbers have led to concerns about demands on public resources and competition for jobs.

Source: New York Times

Cuba's Castro concerned over 'illegal' activity at U.S. mission



HAVANA (REUTERS) – Cuban President Raul Castro said on Tuesday he was concerned about “illegal” training for dissidents at the U.S. diplomatic mission in Havana, an issue he raised with U.S. President Barack Obama in talks on restoring diplomatic ties.

Cuba and the United States are working to re-establish diplomatic relations that were severed in 1961, but a number of differences still need to be worked out including a U.S. request for freedom of movement for its diplomats in Cuba. Castro spoke with Obama last month at a regional summit in Panama, the first meeting of the leaders of both countries in nearly 60 years.

“What I told them (the Americans), concretely to the president, what most concerns me is that they continue doing illegal things ... for example, graduating independent journalists,” Castro told reporters at Havana’s international airport upon seeing off French President Francois Hollande after an official visit. “They give them I don’t know how many classes, on screen, in teleconferences from the United States. I don’t know if they give them a diploma and of course they give them their corresponding monthly payment,” Castro said. Existing embassies in Havana and Washington were downgraded to interests sections and will be christened as embassies once diplomatic ties are restored. The U.S. interests section has offered classes in journalism, English and how to use the Internet. Cuba sees them as an attempt to undermine the country and meddle in its internal affairs, which would be a violation of international conventions on diplomacy.

Cuba tightly controls its state-owned media and blocks websites from independent journalists, who are typically critics of the one-party political system and denied official press credentials.

Pakistan's leader promises cooperation in hunt for militants



KABUL (REUTERS) – Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif promised coordinated military operations with Afghan forces to hunt down militants along their shared border, saying on a visit to Kabul on Tuesday that he condemned a recent Taliban offensive.

Former Afghan president Hamid Karzai had long accused Islamabad of tacit support of the Afghan Taliban, whose leaders are believed to be hiding in Pakistan. “Any effort by any militant or group to destabilise Afghanistan will be dealt with severely and such elements will be outlawed and hunted down,” Sharif said on Tuesday. “Coordinated operations will be planned and conducted on a mutually agreed basis to target militant hideouts along the border.”

He was speaking during a joint appearance with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who has made improving relations with Pakistan a priority since taking office last year. The neighbours are seeking to increase military cooperation to fight the two main branches of the Taliban, one fighting to topple the U.S.-backed government in Kabul and the other against Pakistan’s government.

“I assure you, Mr. President, that the enemies of Afghanistan cannot be friends of Pakistan,” Sharif said. Ghani’s move to mend ties with Pakistan is partially aimed at convincing Islamabad to use whatever influence it has among Taliban leaders to persuade them to join peace talks.

The Afghan Taliban have been fighting to restore their hard-line Islamist regime that was ousted in a U.S.-led military action in retaliation for sheltering the al Qaeda planners of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on American cities. Afghan and Taliban representatives recently met in Qatar for informal discussions on a possible peace process, but the insurgents have also launched attacks across the country as part of their annual spring offensive. The Taliban push has brought its fighters to the outskirts of a major northern city, Kunduz, and battles with Afghan army and police are ongoing.

Healthy woman's stroke linked to drug in sports supplement

A woman in Sweden had a stroke while exercising, and doctors suspect it was caused by an ingredient in a workout supplement that she was taking — a compound similar to amphetamine.

The 53-year old woman, who was previously healthy and physically active, took a single dose of a sports supplement called Jacked Power (manufactured by the Swedish company MM Sports) shortly before she started her usual, vigorous workout in January 2014.

About 45 minutes into her workout, she started feeling numbness and clumsiness in her left hand, which continued for the rest of the day, and so she went to her doctor. A CT scan showed she had experienced a hemorrhagic stroke, a type of stroke in which a blood vessel bursts or leaks blood into the brain. She recovered, and was discharged from the hospital after five days.

But the woman didn't have any risk factors for stroke — she had a normal blood pressure and weight, and no one in her family had experienced a stroke. Doctors in Sweden concluded that it was likely something in the supplement she took that led to her stroke, and they published a report about her case last year.

After hearing of the case, doctors in the United States asked to test a sample of the woman's supplement for drugs that were not listed among the ingredients on the label, but could have caused the stroke. The only drug found in the supplement was a compound called beta-methylphenethylamine (BMPEA), which is chemically similar to amphetamine, but has never been tested in people, so its health effects are unknown, according to the report published online today (May 11) in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

"This is the first time that we have been able to clearly link BMPEA supplement use with a very serious health consequence," said Dr. Pieter Cohen, a co-author of the report and an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. [Wishful Thinking: 6 'Magic Bullet' Cures That Don't Exist]



In recent years, BMPEA gained increased attention after researchers found the drug in a number of dietary supplements marketed for weight loss and improved athletic performance. In April, the Food and Drug Administration warned five companies to remove the compound from their products, saying that BMPEA did not meet the criteria for a dietary ingredient.

Although the FDA stopped short of saying that BPMEA could be harmful, doctors have been worried that the drug could pose health risks. The new report now provides more evidence of the compound's potentially harmful effects, in that the combination of BMPEA and exercise "appears to be the most probable cause of her stroke," Cohen said.

Studies of BMPEA done in animals in the 1930s and 1940s found that the compound increased heart rate and

blood pressure in cats and dogs, although exactly how BMPEA affects the human body isn't known. Exercise in general increases blood pressure, and so "if the BMPEA further increased blood pressure, that could pose a risk of a bleeding stroke," Cohen said.

Still, the researchers cannot definitely say that the woman's stroke was caused by BMPEA. In rare cases, seemingly healthy people can experience a stroke while exercising. But in these cases, people typically have an underlying brain aneurysm, or a weakening of the blood vessels in the brain that can increase the risk for a hemorrhage.

In the woman's case, her doctors conducted tests and determined that she didn't have an aneurysm. "What was striking here was her brain was 100 percent healthy," Cohen said. MM Sports did not respond to Live

Science's request for comment. But it appears the company has stopped selling Jacked Power, as the supplement is not available on its website.

Still, studies have found BMPEA in other supplements, including some preworkout supplements. Consumers should avoid preworkout supplements in general, because "we have found too many times that they are spiked with synthetic drugs like BMPEA," Cohen said.

The FDA also advises consumers to avoid weight-loss supplements if they look suspicious, because this category of supplements often contains unlisted drugs that can be harmful. Some supplement manufacturers claim that BMPEA is a natural compound that comes from the shrub *Acacia rigidula*, but the FDA hasn't found any evidence that this is true.

Source: Fox News

FOOTBALL STAR CRISTIANO RONALDO GIVES **MILLIONS** TO NEPAL EARTHQUAKE RELIEF



THE soccer icon is well known for his acts of charity. Cristiano Ronaldo is an expert at striking fear into the hearts of defenders, but off the soccer pitch he's proved time and again that he's one of the nicest guys in sports. And the superstar did so yet again recently, donating nearly \$8 million to help global charity Save the Children carry out its earthquake-relief efforts in Nepal. French magazine *So Foot* reported that Ronaldo donated €7 million (or \$7.8 million) to the charity, because he wears No. 7 for his club Real Madrid and country Portugal. He also urged his 102 million Facebook followers to donate as well, according to *Sports Illustrated*. Ronaldo is known for his philanthropic endeavors, having donated millions to children in Gaza as well as tsunami-relief efforts in Indonesia. He has also paid individual children's medical bills on multiple occasions. Nepal was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude quake on April 25 that has already claimed over 8,000 lives.

Source: Time

Patriots done in by their own defiance



NOW is the time when we bring up the old quote, "When you point one finger, there are three fingers pointing back at you."

The sentencing is in for Tom Brady and the Patriots, and it is as harsh as it gets: A four-game suspension for the quarterback, a league-record \$1 million fine for the Patriots, the loss of a 2016 first-round pick, and the loss of a 2017 fourth-round pick.

Don't point the finger at Roger Goodell and Troy Vincent for being too vindictive. Don't point it at Colts general manager Ryan Grigson for being too petty.

The Patriots have no one to blame for this but themselves. They have been arrogant and defiant from the start — demanding apologies when none were deserved, ignoring Goodell's orders of full cooperation and obstructing Ted Wells's investigation.

It was the exact wrong tactic for a team that has been called to the principal's office one too many times in recent years, and with a commissioner looking to reestablish his credibility with the public and the other 31 teams. Now, Goodell is making the Patriots pay.

Make no mistake, the punishment is vindictive and overly harsh for the crime in and of itself. Grigson was being petty by focusing on deflated footballs while his team was getting blown out in the AFC Championship game. Wells didn't get the goods on Brady in his investigation. The report determined that the two underlings, John Jastremski and Jim McNally, did something to those footballs, but didn't get much on Brady, other than he was "generally aware" of the goings-on. But the reason the Patriots are \$1 million poorer today, and Brady's legacy now at least somewhat tainted, is the way the Patriots' organization handled everything.

Why was Wells called in to investigate the matter over three months? Because the Patriots defiantly denied any wrongdoing.

Patriots fans point to other incidents involving equipment tampering — the Panthers and Vikings placing footballs under a heater late last season, and the Chargers using "sticky" towels in 2012 — to prove the absurdity of the Patriots' punishment. The difference between those incidents and Deflategate? Those teams owned up to it. They pleaded guilty and took their medicine. The Patriots kicked and screamed the entire time, and mocked the process. When the Wells Report was released, what was the Patriots' response? Not one of contrition. It was, "Well, the Colts' footballs were deflated, too!" Why did Wells find it "more probable than not" that the Patriots tampered with the footballs? Forget the science, which has giant holes. It's because the Patriots couldn't, or wouldn't, answer Wells's legitimate and unbiased questions.

Why did McNally slip out of the locker room with the bag of footballs without Walt Anderson or another official as his escort? Why did McNally go into that bathroom for one minute and 30 seconds? Why didn't McNally tell NFL officials about his trip to the bathroom at first, eventually change his story, then say incorrectly that he used a urinal in a bathroom that doesn't have a urinal? Why did McNally and Jastremski text each other about needles, and then lie about a reference to a "friend" that clearly was about Brady? Why did Brady say he didn't know McNally when Jastremski said he definitely did? Their sudden amnesia hurt them badly in the court of Goodell.

Finally, why were the punishments so harsh both for Brady and the organization? They didn't fully cooperate, as Wells explained in frustration in his report.

The Patriots refused to make McNally available for a follow-up interview after the investigators discovered new information, ostensibly the "deflator" comments in McNally's texts. Their rationale was that McNally already had been interviewed four times, and a fifth time would have

been excessive, because he lives in New Hampshire and has a job. Sorry. You make him available on the weekend, or after work. If McNally could exonerate the Patriots, they should have made him available 27 times.

And Brady refused to hand over any electronic communications, "despite being offered extraordinary safeguards by the investigators to protect unrelated personal information," Vincent wrote Monday.

The Patriots' organization is livid today, of course, but the one person who should be especially upset is Brady. The quarterback certainly deserves a lot of the blame, but from the moment Bill Belichick told reporters on Jan. 22 that "Tom's personal preferences on his footballs are something that he can talk about in much better detail and information than I could possibly provide," the bull's-eye has been placed squarely on Brady. The Patriots should be the one taking the brunt of this. They're the ones employing two men running around the bowels of Gillette Stadium talking about needles and deflating footballs. They're the ones with the bottomless pockets and less to lose in the public eye than Brady, the NFL's golden boy. Lose a first-round pick and get docked \$1 million? Whatever. The Patriots can handle that. Instead, Brady is the one taking the fall. It's his Wikipedia page that now forever will have a mention of cheating and suspension. He's the one who has been branded a cheater in the eyes of Patriots haters across the country, even if he didn't have a direct hand in deflating the footballs.

This saga is hardly over, of course. There will be appeals, and lawyers. Many lawyers. But most of these penalties probably could have been avoided had the Patriots shown a little humility and accepted fault at the beginning. Instead, the Patriots taunted the NFL, and got smacked down by Goodell's vengeful hand.

Source: bostonglobe